

Volunteers

Perhaps the first and biggest benefit people get from volunteering is the satisfaction of incorporating service into their lives and making a difference in their community and country. The intangible benefits alone—such as pride, satisfaction and accomplishment—are worthwhile reasons to serve. In addition, when we share our time and talents, we:

- Solve problems
- Strengthen communities
- Improve lives
- Connect to others
- Transform our own lives

Over the past two decades we have also seen a growing body of research that indicates volunteering provides individual health benefits in addition to social benefits. This research, which is presented by the Corporation in a report titled “The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research,” has established a strong relationship between volunteering and health: those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression later in life than those who do not volunteer. Comparisons of the health benefits of volunteering for different age groups have also shown that older volunteers are the most likely to receive greater benefits from volunteering, whether because they are more likely to face higher incidence of illness or because volunteering provides them with physical and social activity and a sense of purpose at a time when their social roles are changing. Some of these findings also indicate that volunteers who devote a “considerable” amount of time to volunteer activities (about 100 hours per year) are most likely to exhibit positive health outcomes.

From Corporation for National and Community Service
<http://www.cns.gov/about/volunteering/benefits.asp>

Volunteer Resources Sheet

Based on work by Kathy Maran-Wallace
Nevin Memorial Library, Methuen MA
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Websites for Librarians

[Free Management Library](http://www.managementhelp.org/)

<http://www.managementhelp.org/>

scroll down the list and click volunteer

This site provides articles and suggested books on topics of interest to nonprofits and profit organizations.

Energize Inc.

<http://energizeinc.com/>

Energize, Inc. is an international training, consulting and publishing firm specializing in volunteerism.

Friends of the Library U.S.A.

<http://www.folusa.org/>

look under resources fact sheet number five

Don't forget about this important source of library volunteers. Their website has a fact sheet that outlines how to organize a Junior Friends of the Library Group.

Websites for Adults

Pastport Time

<http://www.passportintime.com/>

Pastport time is (PIT) is a volunteer archaeology and historical preservation program of the USDA Forest Service.

Peace Corps

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm>

The Peace Corps' mission has three simple goals: Helping the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women. Helping promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served. Helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

Corporation for National and Community Service

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/>

The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Their programs include Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Vista, AmeriCorps NCCC, and Learn and Serve America.

Action Without Borders

<http://www.idealists.org/>

Action Without Borders is independent of any government, political ideology, or religious creed. Their work is guided by the common desire of our members and supporters to find practical solutions to social and environmental problems, in a spirit of generosity and mutual respect.

Websites for Teens

It's My Life

<http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/emotions/volunteering/index.html>

A Public Broadcasting site - PBS Kids, which promotes volunteering.

TGRW

<http://www.byggpub.com/books/tg2rw/volunteer.htm>

Twenty ways for teenagers to help other people by volunteering - an except from The Teenager's Guide to Real World (TGRW) by Marshall Brain.

Books for Librarians

Teen Volunteer Services in Libraries by Kellie M. Gillespie

Managing Library Volunteers: A Practical Toolkit by Preston Driggers and Eileen Dumas

Other Resources

"Top Ten Myths and Realities of Working with Teen Volunteers" by Kellie Shoemaker, **Voya**, April 1998

also found in **Teen Volunteer Services in Libraries** by Kellie M. Gillespie

From the Trenches

Each year the Monona Public Library successfully invites middle school age children to participate in "Kids As Storytellers." Youth services librarian Karen Wendt developed this program when she recognized an interest the middle schoolers were showing in working directly with preschoolers and elementary-grade children. "Kids As Storytellers" reinforces the reading skills and confidence of the participants, gives them insight into performance situations, and broadens their appreciation of children's literature and ways to involve young children in the world of books. Her description of the program taken from *Go Global: Read! 1991 Summer Library Program Manual*, edited by Jane A. Roeber for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is below:

The first week of my summer programming does not include a storytime. Instead, I invite any middle school student interested in participating in "Kids As Storytellers" to meet on that Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock. That is the day and time that storytimes will be presented during the rest of the summer. The meeting lasts an hour and a half. By having our first meeting this way, I know the volunteers probably have that time slot open in their schedules. There are some who have summer school classes, but also want to be included in "Kids As Storytellers" when their classes finish in mid-July. This usually means that they only get in on two or four storytime sessions, but it is worth it to them, and I try to accommodate them.

At the first meeting of the "Kids As Storytellers" group, I hand out a packet of materials including a list of good picture books to use with group, a list of some storytime hints and tips, and a calendar of the summer weeks when they will be involved. I provide a selection of tried and true book, prop stories, fingerplays, puppets, songs and other activities. After discussing the library's expectations for them and for the program, we talk about the kind of things that happen at storytime. We describe the structure of the program and what to expect the next week when there will be 20 or 30 three- to nine-year olds in the room. I demonstrate using a book to tell a story, flannelboard stories, fingerplays, and using props.

Everyone is given about ten minutes to look over the materials displayed and to pick one story that interests them. They have about 15 minutes to go off to a corner and practice their tales. Then we have a show-and-tell session. Some get right into it immediately

and perform for use with e'lan. Others are shy about performing in front of their peers. I draw them out by asking about the book. Soon they don't even realize that they are "telling" the story by answering my questions and are ready for any audience!

Once they have something picked out to perform for the young storytime children the next week, I give them some helpful hints for sharing that particular book, prop story, or whatever it is they have chosen. They check out any materials they are going to take home for practicing. I also have a paper check-out form for items that don't have barcodes. I also use the check-out forms to help everyone keep organized as to who is doing what at the next storytime. I ask them to call once they have practiced their stories to let me know how much time they need. Even if they forget to call, I can make a pretty good estimate based on my own knowledge of the materials and can plan my own storytime opening and close. The call helps get the "Kids As Storytellers" used to checking in with me and let me know they are practicing.

The "Kids As Storytellers" are asked to arrive a few minutes before the library opens the following Wednesday. That insures that they are in place when the younger children come for the 10:15 a.m. storytime. Sometimes we need to do a last minute practice session or make adjustments if someone wasn't able to make it that week after all. I let them know what the order of the performance will be, but I try to give them input on this decision. After each perform, they are asked to wait in the back of the room and participate in the rest of the storytime. The younger children love it when the older ones join in the chants and songs! After storytime, I say good-bye to the children and parents and make sure things are going smoothly at the circulation desk. Meanwhile, the "Kids As Storytellers" group looks at the next set of materials I have ready for them.

I meet with the group about 11:00 a.m. to commend them for their work and give out some general tips based on what I observed. I don't offer specific constructive criticism to individuals in front of the group, and I limit my suggestions to things that are really important. I have found that lots of praise and a gradual introduction of suggestions for improvement as the summer progresses is a good approach. We spend about half an hour going over the materials for the next week and checking them out. After two or three weeks, I bring out the readers theater books and let the "Kids As Storytellers" use them to work up skits. Having at least one skit ready for each week's storytime has proven desirable.

I usually have about eight teens in the "Kids As Storytellers" group, and they are a delight to work with. Their interaction with the younger children is fun to watch, and I'm sure they are inspiring some of those in the audience to become performers themselves.

Teen Volunteers

created by Michelle Hamiel

and presented at Supportive Environments for Teens!

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Why have teen volunteers?

Teen volunteering promotes a positive self-image, a sense of compassion for others, and a feeling of empowerment to instigate positive change in the community. A teen volunteer program gives teens the opportunity to enhance their decision making skills, and take responsibility for their work performance. It will also foster a greater sense of independence. But most importantly it gives teens "something to do." A good teen volunteer program provides a venue for teens to develop into productive adult library users.

Ten reasons for having teen volunteers

1. Helps the library run more efficiently.
2. There are High Schools with teenagers in them in every community.
3. There is a library that services every community.
4. Teen volunteers can help the staff better understand the teens we serve.
5. Positive experiences may help teens to decide to become library employees, even librarians and circulation staff members.
6. Positive teen experiences in the library may lead to an adult library philanthropist.
7. Volunteering gives teens something to do.
8. Teen will value the library more.
9. Teens can earn the respect of adults.
10. Teens can be presented in a positive light.
11. Volunteering builds relationships.

More than 50 tasks for Teen Volunteers

1. Weeding new books
2. Dusting display shelves
3. Displaying books on shelving
4. Create a pre-planned display
5. Maintain the sale book area
6. Empty the book drop
7. Maintain public pickup
8. Make sure all desks have the necessary supplies
9. Meeting room set up and clean up
10. Program assistance (counting attendees, help with craft)
11. Cut scrap paper
12. Serve as greeters
13. Assist with catalog use
14. Assist with special book sales
15. Assist with storytimes
16. Withdrawing materials
17. Returns
18. Collect book reviews for book clubs
19. Run a teen book club
20. Compile database of volunteers, school contacts, programs
21. Conducting inventories of supplies

22. Create a book review newsletter
23. Create bulletin board displays
24. Merchandise in teen areas
25. Maintain (straighten seasonal materials)
26. Develop activities to support storytimes
27. Document programs
28. Manage in house surveys
29. Dust shelves
30. Assist with children's computer
31. Help with outreach events
32. Straighten periodicals
33. Shift the collection
34. Organize supply areas
35. Prepare for the Summer Reading Club
36. Pull materials from the purge report and the COLMAN report
37. Read one on one to children
38. Recruit other teen volunteers
39. Search the teen website to update site
40. Manage an advisory board
41. Shelve materials
42. Label books for special collections
43. Straighten the children's area
44. Vacuum the easy bins
45. Clean toddler toys
46. Clean computers
47. Gather recycling
48. Box withdrawn books
49. Write reviews of materials that might be of interest to kids or teens
50. Serve as mentors to younger teens
51. Wash shelves
52. Develop a teen newsletter
53. Develop a teen zine